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AMENDMENTS TO THE SPECIFICATION

Please replace paragraph [0018] with the following amended paragraph:

[0018] The pinned layer 14 may comprise a stack of magnetic and associated adjacent sublayers. For example, the pinned layer 14 may comprise a tantalum seed sublayer, a nickel-iron seed sublayer, a magnesium oxide, ~~iridium-manganese~~ iridium-manganese, platinum-manganese or nickel-manganese pinning sublayer, and a nickel-iron, nickel-iron-cobalt, cobalt-iron or nickel-iron-chromium sublayer. The barrier layer 16 is preferably thin enough to allow the tunneling of electrons from the sense layer 18 to the pinned layer 14. The barrier layer 16 may comprise, for example, aluminum oxide, having a thickness within the range of about 0.5 nm to about 3 nm, preferably within the range of about 1 nm to about 2 nm. Like the pinned layer 14, the sense layer 18 may comprise a stack of magnetic and associated adjacent blanket sublayers. For example, the sense layer 18 may comprise a tantalum sublayer, a tungsten nitride sublayer, and a nickel-iron, nickel-iron-cobalt, cobalt-iron, cobalt or copper sublayer.

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